Amateur Radio Newsline(tm) Report 1661 - June 12 2009

Amateur Radio Newsline report number 1661 with a release date of Friday, June 12th, 2009 to follow in 5-4-3-2-1.

The following is a Q-S-T. Navy MARS asks permission to close operation. Will the government say yes? Also, President Obama says that part of being prepared is having a weatherproof radio at hand, WB4APR proposes a new 29 to 24 MHz high frequency satellite, the FCC T-hunts down an alleged shopping mall jammer, Australia tests its first digital Amateur Television repeater and Toshiba brings the Morse code to texting. Find out the details on Amateur Radio Newsline(tm) report number 1661 coming your way right now.

(Billboard Cart Here)

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RESTRUCTURING: NAVY-USMC MARS LIKELY TO GO QRT

The days of Navy and Marine Corps MARS may be fast coming to an end. This, according to a directive released by the commander of the Naval Network Welfare Command. One that says that this branch of the Military Affiliate Radio Services will terminate all operations at the end of this summer. Amateur Radio Newsline's Bruce Tennant, K6PZW, has the details:

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According to the May 16th directive, the commander of the Naval Network Welfare Command has decided to sunset the Navy's MARS mission effective September 30th. Sunset in this case means to terminate and disband. As a result, the Naval Network Welfare Command has requested that all military and civilian positions be deleted and left un-funded after that date.

Navy and Marine MARS is a joint operation. One of the consequence of this decision is that all Navy MARS Area Directors have been ordered to close their offices no later than the September 30th deadline. The directive also says that none of the equipment located at Area Director Stations can be transferred to Navy MARS members. It can however be given over to other official Navy organizations to help start or equip military recreation stations. However, approval for this will be on a case by case basis.

And what about all the radio gear out there in the hands of MARS members? Also, the equipment that may have been disposed of over the years by the families of Silent Key Navy MARS operators? Will the Navy be seeking its return? As we go to air, nobody we have contacted seems to have any answers to these and other questions related to the imminent termination of U-S Navy MARS.

There is one caveat. As you are likely aware, all three MARS services operate under the mandate of the Department of Defense and that mandate is still valid. While the Army and Air Force have stated their desire

to continue their respective MARS programs, only the Navy has requested to opt out. For that to happen requires approval up the Department of Defense chain of command. If that permission is not given the Navy says that its MARS program will continue, but without any Area Directors.

More on this as we get it. For the Amateur Radio Newsline, I'm Bruce Tennant, K6PZW, in Los Angeles.

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According to Wikipedia dot com, the organization that led to the Military Affiliate Radio System was first called the Army Amateur Radio System or A-A-R-S. It was created in November 1925 by a few dedicated pioneers in the United States Army Signal Corps led by Captain Thomas C. Rives. His original intent was to enlist the talents of volunteer amateur radio operators as a ready source who could train soldiers in the then new technology of radio, as well as pursuing radio research and development to improve radio equipment within the Army. This support would be particularly useful during the mobilization of forces by providing a pool of already trained radio operators. Their efforts were very successful, and the present-day MARS program is the direct descendant of the work of those early pioneers. (K1AA, KZ1Z, others)

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RESCUE RADIO: PRESIDENT OBAMA SAYS TO BE PREPARED

United States President Barack Obama has urged residents of hurricane inclined areas to take responsibility for their own safety and start planning now.

Following a recent disaster preparedness briefing at the Federal Emergency Management Agency the president said that individuals should be ready with a supply of nonperishable food, water and first aid kits. This, to wait out any emergency that might hit their area. The leader of the free world added that it is also essential to have at least one waterproof radio that will work in the rain.

At his press briefing the president noted that it is state governments have the primary responsibility for preparing for and responding to disasters. But he added that all the resources of the federal government are there to back them up. (Published news reports)

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HAM RADIO IN SPACE: 28 TO 24 MHz HAMSAT PROPOSED

A satellite with a 29 to 24 MHz linear transponder is being proposed by the ham who brought the world A-P-R-S.   Bob Bruninga, WB4APR,, who helped in the development of a number of successful amateur radio satellites has floated a proposal for a satellite with the odd combination of frequencies for the on-orbit linear transponder.

In an e-mail to the AMSAT Bulletin Board WB4APR says that consideration is being given to a an HF transponder for the next long range CUBESAT

mission planning. It can have three modes, These are APRS at 1200 baud for command and control and APRS on 145.825; a PSK-31 multi-user SSB uplink on 29 MHz and FM down link on 145.825 and lastly the already mentioned 29 MHz uplink and 24 MHz downlink SSB transponder

Bruninga adds that they are looking for someone in the AMSAT community that wants to contribute to the HF transponder design. (WB4APR)

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HAM RADIO IN SPACE: CIRQUE DU SOLEIL FOUNDER TO VISIT ISS

The British Broadcasting Company reports that the founder of the performance group Cirque du Soleil will visit the International Space Station in September. According to the news service, 49 year old Guy Laliberte will travel to the International Space Station on a Russian Soyuz transport vehicle.

Laliberte trip to the International Space Station is estimated to cost at least $25 million dollars. The Quebec-based billionaire will become the seventh private citizen to visit the orbital outpost since April 2001. No word yet if he plans to obtain an amateur licensee and operate from space as all past space adventurers have.

And for those of you who do not know that Cirque du Soleil means, its French for Circus of the Sun. You can read the full BBC news story at http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/sci/tech/8083336.stm) (Southgate)

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EMERGING TECHNOLOGY: THE ANSWER IS BLOWEN IN THE WIND

The UK telecommunications regulator Ofcom has published a report dealing with the effects of interference caused by power generating Wind Farms turbines. This, to Ultra High Frequency and Super High Frequency communications.

The report was prepared by ERA Technology Ltd and Aegis Systems Ltd. It describes a technical study in which a series of measurements were carried out with regard to the presence of wind turbines near to wireless services.

Some of their findings include the fact that a single turbine can produce measured fades as large as 3 dB for UHF scanning telemetry links and 2 dB for fixed links operating between 1.5 and 18 GHz. This, when the turbine is lying on the transmitter-receiver path. Also established is that a wind farm with seventeen turbines can produce measured fades as large as 10 to 15 dB for 1% of the time when the wind farm is lying on the transmitter-receiver path.

The purpose of the study was to enhance understanding of the effects of wind turbines near to wireless Services. The full text of this propagation study and report in PDF Format is available at http://www.ofcom.org.uk/radiocomms/ifi/licensing/classes/fixed/Windfarms/rf_ measurement/windfarm_report.pdf (ANS)

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BREAK 1

>From the United States of America, We are the Amateur Radio Newsline, heard on bulletin stations around the world including the KC6OCA repeater serving Lake Isabella California.

(5 sec pause here)

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ENFORCEMENT: FCC T-HUNTS DOWN SHOPPING MALL RADIO SYSTEM JAMMER

Every once in a while, the FCC hits a home run with outstanding direction finding work leading to an important find. The case of Kevin Bondy, the licensee of station WQGX752 who now faces a $24,000 fine is one of those. Amateur Radio Newsline's Bill Pasternak, WA6ITF, has the rest of the story:

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According to the CGC communicator, the case involves a dedicated and industrious jammer causing willful and repeated interference to the radio channels licensed to The Oaks Shopping Center in Thousand Oaks, California . Its also the story of an even more dedicated FCC agent determined to get his man and the FCC release has the full story.

Thousand Oaks is an affluent suburb about 45 miles West of downtown Los Angeles. And it was there the FCC alleges that Kevin Bondy tried to force a local shopping center off of its two-way radio channels for reasons not yet fully understood.

The story goes back to this past February 25th. That's when the Los Angeles FCC Office received a complaint from the security manager for The Oaks Shopping Center. He told the FCC that the malls communications systems 461.375, 462.525, 467.525 and 466.375 MHz were being jammed.

The next day an agent from the Enforcement Bureau's Los Angeles Office contacted the security manager. The security manager also told the agent that the rather brazen jammer had told shopping center to stop using 461.375MHz which is the security repeater input frequency.

On March 5th the Los Angeles agent T-hunted down the source of pulsating signals on the 461.375 and 466.375 MHz channel pair. It was found to be a repeater located within a secured radio communications facility on Oat Mountain. That's a 3000 foot hilltop in the Santa Susana Mountains that 's very popular with two-way radio users.

While atop Oat Mountain the agent observed radio equipment which he found was the source of the pulsating signals and a beam antenna connected to it pointed in the direction of Thousand Oaks. There seemed no doubt that this set-up was intended to interfere with normal transmissions on the shopping centers frequencies,.

Fast forward to March 6th. The FCC agent was monitoring the 461.375 and 466.375 MHz channel pair in the vicinity of shopping center and again observed pulsating signals. Later that day, in consultation with personnel from The Oaks and the Ventura County Sheriff's Department, the Los Angeles agent came up with a plan to locate the person who source of the transmissions.

Personnel from the shopping center engaged unknown operator into a QSO. The FCC agent had instructed shopping center personnel to keep the subject talking for as long as possible so that he could a fix of the transmissions. They did, and it was during that contact that the jammer told the shopping center personnel that they had "plenty of warning" to vacate the frequencies as he demanded. The jammer then effectively shut down all operations on The Oaks radio systems by transmitting NOAA weather radio over every channel. The jamming station then reportedly said that he would gave The Oaks three weeks to vacate the frequencies. If the center refused, he told them that there would be more jamming to come. He also told the centers personnel that the reason for the jamming was -- and we quote: "we need the channel."

Meantime, the agent was hard at work T-Hunting and at approximately 7:30 p.m., he hit pay-dirt. This, when he found the originating source of the transmissions to be a vehicle located in the National Park Service parking structure across the street from the shopping center.

At this point the Ventura County Sheriff's Department secured the area and identified the subject as Kevin W. Bondy. The Los Angeles FCC agent identified himself to Bondy and asked to inspect the radio equipment in his vehicle. Bondy first refused, then agreed and then refused again. The agent explained that a refusal to allow an inspection could result in a fine. Bondy's refusal was witnessed by Ventura County Sheriff's Department deputies.

On March 9, 2009, the FCC agent revisited the radio communications facility on Oat Mountain. At that time he observed that the beam antenna had been removed and the interference to The Oaks radio systems had ceased.

And now it has literally become time for Bondy to pay the proverbial piper. In its May 14th Notice of Apparent Liability issued to Bondy, the FCC says that his violations of the Communications Act warrant his being fined $24,000.

Bondy was given the usual 30 days to pay up or to file an appeal. Meantime, the Oaks shopping Center has been interference free thanks to the work of an unknown but very dedicated FCC agent.

For the Amateur Radio Newsline, I'm Bill Pasternak, WA6ITF, in the newsroom in Los Angeles.

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The penalties faced by Bondy might not end with just a proposed fine.

The FCC can challenge the renewal of his licensee of station WQGX752 or any other FCC issued license he might hold. It could even order a license revocation hearing at an earlier date. The full FCC document is on-line at http://www.fcc.gov/eb/FieldNotices/2003/DOC-290813A1.html) (CGC, FCC)

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RESCUE RADIO: HELPING THOSE WHO REALLY NEED IT

"Helping Those Who Really Need It" is the title of an interesting article in the June issue of CQ Magazine dealing with the changing landscape of amateur radio emergency communications. Authored by former police and fire chief Jerry Boyd. N7WR, the article explains the way in which non government organizations such as hospitals, bus systems, schools and independent municipal agencies may be the new clients that will be looking to ham radio for assistance in coming days. Boyd points to the California-based Hospital Disaster Support Communications Service as an excellent example of a ham radio support group that serves a specific need. You can read the entire article beginning on page 52 of the June issue of CQ Magazine. Its on newsstands right now. (ARNewsline(tm))

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HAM HOLIDAYS: KIDS DAY 2009 - JUNE 20

The second Kids Day operating event of 2009 takes place on Saturday, June 20th. This, from 1800 to 2400 UTC.

According to the ARRL, Kids Day is an on-air event to encourage young people who may or may not yet be licensed to have fun with Amateur Radio. For those who do not hold a set of call letters, it's a chance to give them a bit of on-the-air experience and hopefully foster interest in getting a license of their own.

Kids Day also has an important adult purpose as well. For them, it's a chance for older hams to share their station and love for Amateur Radio with children in their area.

During Kids Day you simply open your heart and your ham station to the kids in your neighborhood and operate as much or as little as you like. All participants are eligible to receive a colorful certificate. More info can be found at http://lists.contesting.com/mailman/listinfo/kids (ARRL, others)

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YHOTY 2009: THE JUDGING IS TAKING PLACE

And speaking about youngsters, there will be an Amateur Radio Newsline Young Ham of the Year Award presented this year after all. At the last minute a spurt of valid nominations was received and as we go to air the judging committee is beginning its deliberation process.

If things go as they usually do, we should know who this years honoree

will be in or around mid-July. In the meantime, please do not contact Newsline asking who the person selected is. The committee work is independent of the editorial office and we find out who the person is only an hour or two before the winner is informed.

And what is and what isn't valid nomination you ask? Well those that said something like "-my 7 year old just got his Tech ticket so give him a radio." Those got tossed in the circular file. (YHOTY)

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RADIO BUSINESS: OEM SUPPLIERS FEELING ECONOMIC PINCH

A shake-out is brewing among the world's top original equipment manufacturers. These are the folks known as O-E-M's that anonymously to make the latest cellphones, MP-3 players and even many two-way radios for big names such as Nokia, Sony, Dell, Apple and many others.

Sub-contract manufacturers produce much of the world's electronics, with collective revenue of $306 billion in 2008. But as growth dips into single-digits this year due to the worlds economic recession, and companies such as Celestica, Sanmina and Elcoteq are seeing their revenues drop as consumer stop buying and the companies they supply cutback on orders for new merchandise. This in turn can lead to consolidation among some of the top of these OEM manufacturers as the economy worsens and the publics desire for new electronic products continues to erode. (OEM Electronics News)

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RETRO RADIO: WE5I ON THE AIR ON 6 METER AM

If you have an old 6 meter Gonset Communicator, Clegg 99'er or any other ancient 6 meter AM transceiver and a crystal for 50 point 4 Megacycles -- er -- Megahertz, then you might want to dust it off and fire it up. This is because Graham Welch, WE5I, wants to talk to you using good old fashioned full carrier A.M..

With the summer 6 meter DX season fast approaching, Graham, who lives in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, is on 50 point 4 daily from grid square E-M-15. He is listening for callers from anyone who wants to take the time to talk with middle-America on the Magic Band using A-M. He is also posting his operating schedule on the W6YX VHF Reflector and says that even if you do not hear him first to call him anyway. He just may be listening and waiting to hear your call. (VHF Reflector)

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BREAK 2

This is ham radio news for today's radio amateur. From the United States of America, We are the Amateur Radio Newsline with links to the world from our only official website at www.arnewsline.org and being relayed by the volunteer services of the following radio amateur:

(5 sec pause here)

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EMERGING TECHNOLOGY: AUSTRALIAN DIGITAL ATV FOLLOW-UP

A follow-up to our recent story about the Australian Amateur Television repeater that's converting to digital operation. Late word is that a June 7th test transmission made by the VE3RTV machine from a hilltop east of Melbourne went exceedingly well.

Reportedly, more than a half dozen V-K hams in and around the Melbourne area received the repeater signal totally noise free. The test transmitter used commercial quality DVT-B standard digital television boards made in Germany. Receivers were commonly used domestic Australian DTV-B converter boxes that were re-tuned to 446.5 MHz A-T-V frequency.

More on this story can be read in the news section of the Amateur Radio Victoria website www.amateurradio.com.au   (AR Victoria)

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THE SOCIAL SCENE: ATLANTA HAMFEST AT 80

The Atlanta Hamfest will celebrate it's 80th anniversary on June 6th. This, with more than 20 exhibitors, a special event station, ham radio training and testing all crammed into one great day at Jim R. Miller Park in Marietta. Doors open at 8:00 a.m. local time. Enhancing the hamfest will be special event station W4DOC operating both voice and digital modes throughout the event. For more information and directions visit www dot atlantahamfest dot com on the World Wide Web. (N4BFR)

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THE SOCIAL SCENE: PAPERS SOUGHT FOR AMSAT SPACE SYMPOSIUM

And a call for has gone out for papers to be presented at the 2009 AMSAT Annual Meeting and Space Symposium. Proposals for papers, symposium presentations and poster presentations are invited on any topic of interest to the amateur satellite community. A tentative title of your presentation is required as soon as possible with final copy submitted by September 1st. This, for inclusion in the printed proceedings.

The dates of the symposium are October 9th to the 11th. The venue is the Four Points Sheraton Hotel at the Baltimore Washington Airport.

Abstracts and papers should be sent via e-mail to Dan Schultz, N8FGV. His e-mail is n8fgv (at) amsat (dot) org. (ANS)

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NAMES IN THE NEWS: W4LAA TO RETIRE FROM NIGHTLY BUSINESS REPORT

Some names in the news. First is Paul Kangas, W4LAA, the co-anchor of

"Nightly Business Report" on PBS. He has announced that he will step down at the end of the year, ending a 30-year tenure on the nation's most-watched business newscast.

Kangas told Radio World that he was leaving the anchor chair in part to reduce the pressure of the daily deadlines that come with a TV program. Now 72, he was hired to be a stock market commentator when the "Nightly Business Report" had its premiere in 1979. He became an anchor on the show in 1990. (RW)

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NAMES IN THE NEWS: WA4AW NAMED NEW SOUTHEASTERN VICE DIRECTOR

Southern Florida Assistant Section Manager Jeff Beals, WA4AW, has been appointed Vice Director in the ARRL's Southeastern Division, effective June 1st.

Beals holds an Extra class licensee, and was first licensed in the early 1960s as WN2OUK. He splits his time between Royal Palm Beach, Florida and Dolthan, Alabama.

WA4AW has served as Southern Florida Assistant Section Manager since 2002. He has also held appointments as Section Emergency Coordinator, Affiliated Club Coordinator, Technical Coordinator, Technical Specialist and District Emergency Coordinator.

Beals replaces his longtime friend and Dolthan resident Sandy Donohue, W4RU, who passed away last month. (ARRL)

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NAMES IN THE NEWS: W8GSM AND W2GPS TO STEP DOWN FROM AMSAT-NA BOD

Gunther Meisse, W8GSM, and Rick Hambly, W2GPS, have said that neither plans to seek re-election to the AMSAT North America Board of Directors. This leaves only Barry Baines, WD4ASW and Drew Glasbrenner, KO4MA trying for another term.

In addition to Baines and Glasbrenner, others seeking positions on the AMSAT board thus far are Anthony Monteiro, AA2TX, Bill Ress, N6GHZ and Alan Biddle, WA4SCA.

Valid nominations for the 2009 AMSAT Board of Directors elections must be received at the AMSAT office is no later than June 15th. An AMSAT North America director serves a 2 year term. (ANS)

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NAMES IN THE NEWS: M0OBW ELECTED NEW RSGB PRES

And the UK's David Wilson, M0OBW, has been elected as the new president of the Radio Society of Great Britain. This, to serve for the 2010 to 2011 term.

Wilson currently holds positions of Emerging Technologies and RSGB

Convention on the society's board . He is also very active in the RSGB-sponsored Train the Trainer program. (GB2RS)

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ON THE AIR: CANADIAN GROUP CELEBRATES ASTRONOMY

On the air, word that Canada's Westcoast Amateur Radio Association will be QRV as VE7IYOA during the month of June. Their QTH is Victoria, British Columbia and they are operating to mark the International Year of Astronomy. Their main operating times will be on weekends ands and during the upcoming ARRL Field Day. QSL to VE7DAO. (WARA)

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ON THE AIR: CELEBRATING THE ORIGINAL 13 US COLONIES

A special event to celebrate the 13 original colonies that be came the United States will be on the air from July 1st at 1300 U-T-C to July 5th at 04:00 U-T-C. According to KU2US. a full color certificate with a map with state flags of all the 1776 colony states will be available to each station who works one or more of the special event stations. Full details are at http://home.comcast.net/~dzabawa/ThirteenColonies.htm   (via E-mail)

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ON THE AIR: CELEBRATING WORLD ENVIRONMENT DAY

The Vienna International Center Amateur Radio Club was on the air as 4U1WED on "World Environment Day. This year the center also celebrates its 30th anniversary and thus and outside Environment Day will use the call 4U30VIC from July until December. QSL cards for both calls should be sent via the bureau to 4U1VIC. (QRZ-DX)

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DX

In D-X, F5JNE will be active from Belle-Ile-en-Mer between 16 and 24 June. Operation will be CW only on 40 and 20 meters, mainly in the evenings. QSL via F5JNE, direct or by the French REF Bureau.

K7BV will return to San Andres as 5J0BV between June 18th to the 29th. He will concentrate on 6 meter Sporadic E contacts but will also activate the high frequency bands as well QSL direct to K7BV via his QRZ.com address.

F6ITD, will be also be active from the same location between the 20th and 28th of June. Activity will be on many of the HF bands on SSB only. QSL via F6ITD.

G4KIU, has moved to Rarotonga and is operating as E51SC using SSB, RTTY, PSK31 and some CW on 80 through 10m. QSLs via bureau to G4KIU or direct to Nigel Peacock, PO Box 880, Rarotonga, Cook Islands via New

Zealand. He is also uploading his log data to the Logbook to the World, but once a week.

8N5I will be on the air from Shikoku Island until June 15th. QSL via the JARL bureau.

W5YDX operating portable VP9 will be on Bermuda through June 24th. He plans to operate holiday style focussing on 20 and 17 meters using 100 watts and dipoles. QSL via W5YDX.

KJ4GNB is on Ascension Island and has been heard as ZD8DC in SSB on 20 meters. The length of his stay is not known. QSL cards should be sent via bureau to KJ4GNB.

Lastly, PF4T will be active as 8Q7TB from Embudu Island through June 25th. He's reportedly operating only SSB on 40 and 20 meters using an FT-897 and a G5RV antenna. QSLs direct or via bureau to PA0LEY.

(Above from various DX news sources)

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THAT FINAL ITEM: CLIQUE TO TEXTING USING MORSE

And finally this week, texting addicts will soon have a new plaything, but will need to learn C-W to use it. This, as Toshiba teams up with microprocessor manufacturer Intel to produce Clique. This is described as a handheld, thumb-operated communications device that uses only three keys produce Morse code for sending text messages.

A Toshiba spokesperson says that Morse was chosen as the communications medium because it is an easily learned and is ideally suited to the single-digit platform. She explained that the Morse code has been in use for more than 160 years which longer than any other electronic encoding system.

Earlier attempts to create a Morse-based texting device were stymied by the variable length of the Morse characters which made it hard to adapt to automated text conversion circuits. Toshiba's solution is the three keys. One is used for dots, another for dashes and the third that acts as a space-bar between letters. One tap separates letters while two taps go between words.

First released in Japan at the 2008 Microprocessor Forum, the Clique is the size and shape of a lollipop with the handle acting as a miniature joystick. Its reception in Japan has been described as fast and furious as early adopters added ï¿½Clique' to their armory of hand-held communications devices.

The Clique is not yet available in the United States but more about it is on-line at http://mhpbooks.com/mobylives/?pe35 (KZ1Z)

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NEWSCAST CLOSE

With thanks to Alan Labs, AMSAT, the ARRL, the CGC Communicator, CQ Magazine, the FCC, the Ohio Penn DX Bulletin, Radio Netherlands, Rain, the RSGB, the Southgate News and Australia's WIA News, that's all from the Amateur Radio Newsline(tm). Our e-mail address is newsline@arnewsline.org. More information is available at Amateur Radio Newsline's(tm) only official website located at www.arnewsline.org. You can also write to us or support us at Amateur Radio Newsline(tm), P.O. Box 660937, Arcadia, California 91066.

For now, with Bill Pasternak, WA6ITF, at the editors desk, I'm Don Carlson, KQ6FM, saying 73 and we thank you for listening.

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